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Former Marine plans lawsuit to gain information on Oswald

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MERRILLVILLE — A former U.S. Marine intelligence officer intends to file suit to gain access to government information he says may shed more light on whether Lee Oswald was a Soviet or Chinese spy.

Jack Swike of Merrillville said he is preparing a lawsuit under the Freedom of Information Act.

He is seeking information about CIA operations at Atsugi, Japan, where Oswald was a Marine radar controller. Swike, who was an intelligence officer at the same base, said a possible connection between Oswald, the assassin of President John F. Kennedy, and the famous downing of the U-2 spy plane is only one topic he wants to explore.

Atsugi was the base from which the U-2s flew on spy missions that took the planes deep inside China.

Swike said he acted as liaison between intelligence officers of the U.S. Marines, Navy, Air Force and CIA, all of which had detachments at Atsugi.

Now executive director of the Lake County Medical Society, Swike has been doing research for four years in hopes of writing a book on Oswald's activities in the Far East.

He said the book probably won't draw any conclusions, but will present new evidence that Oswald was an informer who gave military secrets not only to the Soviet Union but also to China.

The Warren Commission, which investigated Kennedy's assassination, delved into the possible Oswald-Soviet KGB connection and found little evidence to link any such association to the assassination.

The commission also discounted any foreign involvement in the 1963 assassination.

"The full story hasn't been told," Swike counters. "The Warren Commission didn't investigate the Oswald Far East connection. There is more to all this than the public has been told."

The reason, says Swike, isn't any kind of conspiracy on the part of anyone in the government, although rivalry between the CIA and the FBI may have inadvertently contributed to a cover-up. Swike said the FBI was inept in not investigating Oswald's movements in the Far East and his access to information about several U.S. secrets at Atsugi.

"I have all the names of the 350 Marines were at Atsugi at the time and have spoken to many of them, including other air controllers who say that Oswald was in the radar room when they tracked the U-2s," Swike said.

"At first, they weren't exactly sure what they were watching but they knew it was something special because the blip just went right up off the screens in a flash. The radar covers altitude up to 50,000 feet. It was there and the next glance it was gone."

The takeoffs by the U-2s were like something out of science fiction and they attracted a lot of attention on the base, said Swike.

"The pilots walked out onto the apron wearing spacesuits, and there was a lot of rushing around to fire up the plane's engine," he recounted. "The U-2 would taxi a short way down the runway and all of a sudden it would go straight up."

The spy planes were capable of altitudes of 90,000 feet, and the pilots had to wear refrigerated spacesuits as protection against the heat at the high altitudes.

Swike has interviewed many of the Marines, including Oswald's acquaintances, military officers, and even relatives of Oswald's former buddies at Atsugi, in

compiling information for his book.

He said he has tried four years to get general information about the CIA operations at Atsugi, only to be told that the requests "are pending."

He said he is now about to go into U.S. District Court in Hammond to file suit to force the CIA to disclose contents of the documents.

The requests under the Freedom of Information Act are for information on the CIA Joint Technical Advisory Group at Atsugi, described by Swike as the largest CIA headquarters in the Far East at the time. The intelligence unit was there to assess information gathered from aerial spying in China and Korea, Swike says.

Oswald was stationed at Atsugi with the Marine Air Group and lived on the side of the base next to the technical advisory group.

In the center of the base was the Korean Village populated by Koreans, many of them communists, who were brought over as slave labor by the Japanese during the war, said Swike.

The Navy and Marines had air-control squadrons stationed at Atsugi for the defense of Japan.

As an air controller there in 1957, Oswald had direct access to CIA operatives flying the U-2s, watching the planes and even communicating with the pilots by radio, said Swike.

"Having access to that kind of military information made it seem natural for an avowed Marxist like Oswald to defect," said Swike.

"Oswald was not a dumb little boy like he's been made out to be. That kind of information he could provide was probably his ticket to Russia and any other Communist country where he wanted to travel."

Swike said the material he has gathered and wants to put into a book doesn't make any new charges but it does disclose some

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